DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 158 112 CE 017 762

TITLE	Business Occupations. Reprinted from the Occupational Outlook Handbook, 1978-79 Edition.
INSTITUTION	Bureau of Labor Statistics (DOL), Washington, D.C.
REPORT NO	Bull-1955-8
PUB DATE	78
NOTE	25p.; Photographs in this document will not reproduce well; For related documents see CE 017 756-797
AVAILABLE FROM	Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402 ($0.50 per reprint; $8.00 for set of 42)
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Accountants; *Business; Commercial Art; *Employment Opportunities; *Employment Projections; *Employment Qualifications; Employment Trends; Financial Services; Industrial Relations; Information Sources; Job Skills; Job Training; Lawyers; Managerial Occupations; Marketing; *Merchandising; *Occupational Information; Occupational Mobility; Personnel Management; Promotion (Occupational); Purchasing; Salaries; Wages; Work Environment

ABSTRACT

Focusing on business occupations, this document is one in a series of forty-one reprints from the Occupational Outlook Handbook providing current information and employment projections for individual occupations and industries through 1985. The specific occupations covered in this document include accountants, advertising workers, collections workers, credit managers, industrial traffic managers, lawyers, marketing research workers, personnel and labor relations workers, public relations workers, and purchasing agents. The following information is presented for each occupation or occupational area: a code number referenced to the Dictionary of Occupational Titles; a description of the nature of the work; places of employment; training, other qualifications, and advancement; employment outlook; earnings and working conditions; and sources of additional information. In addition to the forty-one reprints covering individual occupations or occupational areas (CE 017 757-797), a companion document (CE 017 756) presents employment projections for the total labor market and discusses the relationship between job prospects and education. (BM)

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Business Occupations

Reprinted from the
Occupational Outlook Handbook,
1978-79 Edition.

U.S. Department of Labor
Bureau of Labor Statistics
1978

Bulletin 1955-8

Containing the midpoints of the legs of right triangle *RST*, where pt. (−5, 5), S is pt. (1, 2), and T is pt. (3, −2).

Containing the longer diagonal of a quadrilateral whose vertices are pts. (2, 2), (−2, −2), (1, −1), and (6, 4).

Show that the equations $y - 1 = \frac{1}{2}(x + 3)$ and $y - 4 = \frac{1}{2}(x$ are equivalent.

An equation of the line containing pts. (−2, 3) and (4, −1) can be written in the form $y - 3 = -\frac{1}{2}(x + 2)$ or in the form $y + 1 = -\frac{1}{2}(x - 4)$, depending upon which point you take as (x_1, y_1). Show that the two equations are equivalent.

Show that the equations are equivalent.

$$y - y_1 = \frac{y_2 - y_1}{x_2 - x_1}(x - x_1) \qquad y - y_2 = \frac{y_1 - y_2}{x_1 - x_2}(x - x_2)$$

State the equation of a line through pt. (p, q) and parallel to a line containing pts. (a, b) and (c, d). $(a \neq c)$.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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CE 017 762

ACCOUNTANTS

(D.O.T. 160.188)

Nature of the Work

Managers must have up-to-date financial information to make important decisions. Accountants prepare and analyze financial reports that furnish this kind of information.

Three major accounting fields are public, management, and government accounting. Public accountants have their own businesses or work for accounting firms. Management accountants, also called industrial or private accountants, handle the financial records of the company they work for. Government accountants examine the records of government agencies and audit private businesses and individuals whose dealings are subject to government regulations.

Traveling auditor reviewing financial records at a company plant.

Accountants often concentrate on one particular phase of accounting. For example, many public accountants specialize in auditing (reviewing a client's financial records and reports to judge their reliability). Others specialize in tax matters, such as preparing income tax forms and advising their clients of the advantages and disadvantages of certain business decisions. Still others become specialists in management consulting and give advice on a variety of matters. They might develop or revise an accounting system to serve the needs of clients more effectively or give advice about different types of accounting equipment.

Management accountants provide the financial information executives need to make sound business decisions. They may choose to work in areas such as taxation, budgeting, or investments. Internal auditing is an area of specialization within management accounting that is rapidly growing in importance. Accountants who work as internal auditors examine and evaluate their firm's financial systems and management control procedures to ensure efficient and economical operation.

Many accountants in the Federal Government work as Internal Revenue agents, investigators, and bank examiners; other government accountants have regular accounting positions.

Places of Employment

About 865,000 people worked as accountants in 1976. Almost 20 percent were Certified Public Accountants (CPA's) and nearly 12 percent were Certified Internal Auditors (CIA's).

About 60 percent of all accountants do management accounting work; one-fifth of these work as internal auditors. An additional 25 percent are engaged in public accounting as proprietors, partners, or employees of independent accounting firms. Other accountants work for Federal, State, and local government agencies, and a small number teach in colleges and universities.

Opportunities are plentiful for part-time work in accounting, particularly in smaller firms.

Accountants are found in all business, industrial, and government organizations. Most, however, work in large urban areas where many public accounting firms and central offices of large businesses are concentrated. For example, over 20 percent of all accountants are employed in just four major cities: Chicago; Los Angeles; New York; and Washington, D.C.

Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement

Training in accounting is available at colleges and universities, accounting and business schools, and correspondence schools. Although many graduates of business and correspondence schools are successful in small firms, most large public accounting and business firms require applicants for accountant and internal auditor positions to have at least a bachelor's degree in accounting or a closely related field. Many employers prefer those with the master's degree in accounting. A growing number of large employers prefer applicants who are familiar with computer technology for both accounting and internal auditor positions. For beginning accounting positions, the Federal Government requires 4 years of college training (including 24 semester hours in accounting) or an equivalent combination of education and experience. For teaching positions, most colleges and universities require at least the master's degree or the Certified Public Accountancy Certificate.

Previous work experience in accounting can help an applicant get a job. Many colleges offer students an opportunity to gain experience through internship programs conducted by public accounting or business firms.

Anyone working as a "certified public accountant" must hold a certificate issued by the State board of accountancy. All states use the CPA examination, prepared by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, to establish certification. Most successful candidates have college degrees, and three-fourths of the States require CPA candidates to be college graduates. Nearly all States require applicants to have at least 2 years of public accounting experience for a CPA certificate.

Requirements vary, but more than half the States restrict the title "public accountant" to those who are licensed or registered. Some States require only a high school diploma while others require 2 years of college or more. Information on requirements may be obtained directly from individual State boards of accountancy or from the National Society of Public Accountants.

The recognized mark of competence and experience in the field of internal auditing is the designation, Certified Internal Auditor (CIA). The Institute of Internal Auditors, Inc., confers this designation upon candidates who have completed 3 years' experience in internal auditing and who have passed a four-part examination. Beginning in 1978, a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university also will be required.

Persons planning a career in accounting should have an aptitude for mathematics. Neatness and accuracy also are necessary. Employers seek applicants who can handle responsibility and work with little supervision.

To get to the top in the profession, accountants usually must continue their study of accounting even though they already have a college degree or professional certificates. They may participate in seminars sponsored by various professional associations or take courses offered by their employers. A growing number of States require both CPA's and licensed public accountants to complete a certain number of hours of continuing education courses before their licenses can be renewed. An increasing number of accountants study computer operation and programming to adapt accounting procedures to new data processing methods. Although capable accountants should advance rapidly, those having inadequate academic preparation may be assigned routine jobs and find promotion difficult.

Junior public accountants usually start by assisting with auditing work for several clients. They may advance to intermediate positions with more responsibility in 1 or 2 years and to senior positions within another few years. In larger firms, those who deal successfully with top industry executives often become supervisors, managers, or partners, or transfer to executive positions in private firms. Some open their own public accounting offices.

Beginning management accountants often start as ledger accountants, junior internal auditors, or as trainees for technical accounting positions. They may advance to jobs such as chief plant accountant, chief cost accountant, budget director, or manager of internal auditing. Some become controllers, treasurers, financial vice-presidents, or corporation presidents. In the Federal Government, beginners are hired as trainees and usually are promoted in a year or so. In college and university teaching, those having minimum training and experience may receive the rank of instructor without tenure; advancement and permanent faculty status depend upon further education and teaching experience.

Employment Outlook

Employment is expected to increase about as fast as the average for all occupations through the mid-1980's as businesses and government agencies continue to expand in size and complexity. In addition to jobs resulting from growth, many thousands of openings will result each year when workers die, retire, or leave the occupation.

Demand for skilled accountants will rise as managers rely more on accounting information to make business decisions. For example, officers of large corporations base their decisions concerning proposals such as plant expansion, mergers, or foreign investments on information about the financial condition of the firm, tax implications of the proposed action, and other considerations. On a smaller scale, owners of small businesses are expected to rely more and more on the expertise of public accountants in planning their

operations. Government legislation to monitor business activity also is expected to add to the demand for accountants. An example is the Pension Reform Act of 1974, which establishes minimum standards for private pension plans. This and other legislation should create many new jobs for management accountants to maintain new systems and public accountants to audit them.

Because of the growing complexity of business, college graduates will be in greater demand than applicants who lack this training. Many employers prefer graduates who have worked part time in a business or accounting firm while in school. Those who have been trained in a specific phase of accounting should find ample opportunities.

As data processing systems continue to replace manual preparation of accounting records and statements, the need for some accountants to perform routine tasks, particularly in large firms, may be reduced. However, many opportunities will arise for accountants without a college degree, mainly in small businesses and public accounting firms.

Earnings and Working Conditions

Starting salaries of beginning accountants in private industry were $11,500 a year in 1976, according to a survey in urban areas. Earnings of experienced accountants ranged between $15,400 and $23,400, depending on their level of responsibility and the complexity of the accounting system. In general, experienced accountants earn about twice as much as nonsupervisory workers in private industry, except farming. Chief accountants who direct the accounting program of a company or one of its establishments earned between $20,500 and $33,900, depending upon the scope of their authority and size of professional staff.

According to the same survey, beginning auditors averaged $11,800 a year in 1976, while experienced auditors' earnings ranged between $16,100 and $20,000.

In the Federal Civil Service, the entrance salary for junior accountants and auditors was about $9,300 in 1977. Candidates who had a superior academic record received a starting salary of about $11,500. Applicants with a master's degree or 2 years' professional experience began at about $14,100. Accountants in the Federal Government averaged about $21,800 a year in 1977.

Accountants who specialize in income tax preparation work long hours under heavy pressure during the tax season; those employed by national accounting firms may travel extensively to conduct audits and perform other services for their clients. The majority, however, work in one office between 35 and 40 hours a week, under the same general conditions as fellow office workers.

Sources of Additional Information

Information about CPA's and about aptitude tests in high schools, colleges, and public accounting firms may be obtained from:

American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, 1211 Avenue of the Americas, New York, N.Y. 10036.

Further information on specialized fields of accounting is available from:

National Association of Accountants, 919 Third Ave., New York, N.Y. 10022.

National Society of Public Accountants, 1717 Pennsylvania Ave. NW., Washington, D.C. 20006.

Institute of Internal Auditors, 249 Maitland Ave., Altamonte Springs, Fla. 32701.

ADVERTISING WORKERS

(D.O.T. 050.088; 132.088; 141.081 and .168; 162.158; and 164.068 through .168)

Nature of the Work

Almost every business, from a small grocery store to a large bank, does some form of advertising to persuade people to buy its products or use its services. Advertising requires the talents of people in many different kinds of jobs. Creative workers such as writers, artists, and designers develop and produce advertisements, while people with business and sales ability handle the arrangements for broadcasting the advertisements on radio and television, publishing them in newspapers or magazines, mailing them directly, or posting them on billboards. The following occupations are those most commonly associated with advertising.

Advertising managers direct the advertising program of the businesses for which they work. They determine the size of the advertising budget, the type of ad and the media to use, and what advertising agency, if any, to employ. Managers who decide to employ an agency work closely with the advertising specialists from the agency. These managers may supervise the preparation of pamphlets, brochures, or other materials developed to promote the firm's products or services. Advertising managers working for newspapers, radio stations, and other communications media have somewhat different duties. They are responsible for selling advertising time or space, and do work that is similar to the work of sales managers in other businesses.

Account executives are employed by advertising agencies to develop advertising programs for client firms and individuals. They first study the client's sales, public image, and advertising problems, and then create a program that suits the client's needs. In most agencies, artists and copywriters are responsible for developing the actual artwork and advertising copy, but in some small agencies, the account executives have this responsibility.

Research directors and their assistants study the market. They review possible uses for the product or service being sold, compare its advantages or disadvantages with those of competitors, and suggest ways of reaching potential buyers. To develop market information, these workers may survey buying habits and motives of customers, or try out sample ads to find the theme or medium that best sells the product. (See the statement on marketing research workers for more information on this occupation.)

Advertising copywriters develop the headlines and text to be used in

the ads. By studying information about the product and its potential customers, they are able to write copy aimed at the particular group of customers the advertiser seeks to attract. They may specialize in writing copy for a certain group of people, such as business managers, teenagers, or sports lovers, or for a class of products, such as cars or computer equipment. Copywriters usually work closely with account executives. In some agencies, they may be supervised by copy chiefs.

Artists and *layout workers* create the visual impact of an ad by selecting photographs, drawing illustrations or figures, and selecting the size or type of print to be used in a magazine or newspaper ad. When television commercials are planned, they usually sketch sample scenes for the client to consider. (See the statements on commerical artists and photographers for more information on this type of work.)

Media directors (or *space buyers* and *time buyers*) negotiate contracts for advertising space or air time. They determine the day and time when a television commercial will reach the largest group of prospective buyers at the lowest cost. To select the best medium for the advertiser, media directors must know the costs of using various media and the characteristics of the audience reached by specific publications or television stations.

Production managers and their assistants arrange to have the ad printed for publication, filmed for television, or recorded for radio. They must know which firms or freelance workers will be able to produce the best ad for the least cost.

Places of Employment

In 1976, about 180,000 people worked in jobs requiring considerable knowledge of advertising. Those employed in advertising agencies were heavily concentrated in New York City, Los Angeles, and Chicago.

Many others worked in the advertising departments of manufacturing firms, retail stores, banks, power companies, professional and trade associations, and many other organizations. Some people had advertising jobs with television or radio stations, newspapers, and magazines. Still other people in the advertising field worked for printers, art studios, letter shops, package design firms, and similar businesses.

Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement

Most employers prefer college graduates. Some employers seek persons with degrees in advertising with heavy emphasis on marketing, business, and journalism; others prefer graduates with a liberal arts background (social science, literature, art, and other disciplines); some employers place little emphasis on the type of degree.

No particular educational background is equated with success in advertising. In fact, relevant work experience may be more important than educational background. Experience selling ads for school publications or radio stations, or on a summer job with a marketing research service, can be a distinct advantage to the jobseeker.

Some organizations recruit outstanding college graduates for training programs that cover all aspects of advertising work. In other firms, employees immediately enter a specialty and do not gain such all-round experience. Some beginners start as research or production assistants or as space or time buyers. A few begin as junior copywriters.

Many advertising jobs require imagination, creativity, and a flair for language. These traits are especially important to artists, layout workers, and account executives. All creative effort must be directed toward the sales function. People interested in becoming advertising managers, account executives, media buyers, and production managers must be able to get along well with people and be able to sell their ideas. Research directors and their assistants must have an understanding of human behavior. All advertising workers must be able to accept criticism of their work and be able to function as part of a team.

Opportunities for advancement in this field generally are excellent for creative, talented, and hard-working people. For example, copywriters and account executives may advance to more responsible work in their specialties, or to managerial jobs, if they demonstrate ability in dealing with clients. Some especially capable

Advertising can be a satisfying career for persons who enjoy variety, creative challenges, and competition.

workers may become partners in an existing agency, or they may establish their own agency.

Employment Outlook

Employment of advertising workers is expected to increase faster than the average for all occupations through the mid-1980's. Most openings, however, will result from the need to replace workers who die, retire, or leave the occupation for other reasons.

The growing number of consumer and industrial goods and increasing competition in many product and service markets will cause advertising expenditures to rise. Such expenditures also may be spurred by the growing tendency toward self service in retail marketing. An additional factor is the growing need of small businesses for professional advertising services. Employment in advertising occupations is strongly affected by general business conditions because firms expand or contract their advertising budgets according to their financial success. Although opportunities should be favorable for highly qualified applicants, particularly in retail advertising, others seeking entry jobs will face keen competition because the glamorous nature of the field attracts many people.

Local television, radio, and newspapers are expected to increase their share of total advertising expenditures while direct mail, magazines, and national newspapers continue to lose ground. The few very large agencies that account for nearly all national advertising are expected to maintain fast growth because of their expanding international business.

Earnings and Working Conditions

Based on limited information, annual salaries for beginning advertising workers with bachelor's degrees ranged from $8,000 to $10,000 in 1976. Higher starting salaries generally were paid by the largest firms or advertising agencies to outstanding applicants, particularly those with advertising experience.

Salaries of experienced advertising workers varied by size and type of firm as well as by type of job. According to a survey of advertising agencies taken in 1975, average annual salaries of workers in selected occupations were as follows: Chief executive officer, $45,300; account supervisor, $28,400; account executive, $18,500; executive art director, $24,400; art director, $17,100; senior layout artist, $12,900; junior layout artist, $9,300; copy chief, $22,300; senior copywriter, $16,600; junior copywriter, $10,500; media director, $16,800; space or time buyer, $9,400; research director, $24,000; research analyst, $13,500; production manager, $14,400. Several other surveys yielded these results: In 1976, the top advertising officers in large retail firms averaged over $32,000 a year; in 1975, the median salary of advertising directors in large banks ranged from $16,000 to $17,000 a year; in 1975, the average salary of advertising managers in a wide variety of companies ranged from $18,000 to $34,000 a year, depending upon the annual sales volume of the firm. Salaries of advertising managers generally are higher in consumer than industrial products firms, and many receive incentive compensation.

People in advertising work under great pressure, and do not have the job security enjoyed by workers in many other occupations. These workers are expected to produce quality ads in as short a time as possible. Sometimes they must work long or irregular hours to meet deadlines or make last-minute changes. Account executives, copywriters, and layout workers may become frustrated by a client's inability to define the type of ad he or she wants for a product.

Advertising can be a satisfying career for persons who enjoy variety, excitement, creative challenges, and competition. Unlike workers in many other occupations, advertising workers experience the satisfaction of having their work in print, on television, or on radio, even though they remain unknown to the public at large.

Sources of Additional Information

Information on advertising agencies and the careers they offer is available from:

American Association of Advertising Agencies, 200 Park Ave. New York, N.Y. 10017.

For additional information on careers and a list of colleges that provide training in advertising, contact:

American Advertising Federation, 1225 Connecticut Ave. NW., Washington, D.C. 20036.

COLLECTION WORKERS

(D.O.T. 240.368)

Nature of the Work

Companies that lend money or extend credit expect to be repaid. However, customers who "buy now" are not always able to "pay later." Collection workers, often called bill collectors, help maintain a company's financial well-being by keeping bad debts to a minimum.

A collector's primary job duty is to convince people to make good on unpaid bills. The collector usually receives a bad debt file after normal billing methods, such as monthly statements and collection form letters, have failed to elicit payment. The file contains information about the debtor, the nature and amount of the unpaid bill, and the last time payment was made.

The collector then contacts the debtor, determines why the bill is unpaid, and tries to get the debtor to pay or make new arrangements for payment.

The approach that collectors use depends on the type of payment problem they are handling. Sometimes customers feel that the bill is incorrect, or that the merchandise they bought is faulty, or that services they were billed for were not properly performed. Collectors normally recommend that the debtors resolve these disagreements by contacting the original sellers. In large stores, problems are referred to special

"custom service" departments, set up to deal with disputed accounts. If the problems are not settled, the collectors again contact the customers to convince them that they were properly charged and should pay the debts.

When customers have met with financial emergencies or mismanaged their money, collectors may work out new payment schedules. If collectors find customers fraudulently avoiding payment of their bills, they may recommend that the files be turned over to an attorney.

When a debtor moves without leaving a forwarding address, the collector may inquire at the post office, search telephone directories, and call on the person's friends and former neighbors. In large collection operations, this may be done by collection workers known as "tracers."

In small organizations, bill collectors may perform other functions besides contacting delinquent customers. They may advise customers with financial problems, or contact customers to determine if they are satisfied with the way their accounts are being handled. Some collectors supervise the repossession procedure for businesses that reclaim goods when payment is not made.

Although most collectors do their work by phone, some make personal visits to the debtor. These visits usually are necessary when a large amount of money is involved and the debtor has been unresponsive to phone contact.

Places of Employment

About 64,000 persons were collection workers in 1976. Although collectors work for a variety of businesses, most are employed by banks, loan companies, and collection agencies. Many others work for retail and wholesale businesses.

Jobs for collectors are found throughout the United States, but opportunities are best in heavily populated urban centers. Many firms with branch offices in rural areas locate their collection departments in the business district of nearby cities.

Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement

A high school education usually is sufficient for entry into the collection field. Because a collector handles delinquent accounts on a person-to-person basis, high school courses in psychology and speech may be useful. Previous employment as a sales clerk can help the collection worker learn how credit transactions originate and how they are handled at the point of sale. Knowledge of a foreign language may be an asset for persons seeking collection jobs in areas with large non-English-speaking populations.

Most of a collector's training is on the job. The employer may provide training manuals that explain collection procedures, but more often the new employee gains collection skills informally. For example, the new collector learns telephone techniques by listening as experienced workers make collection calls.

A collector's most important asset is the ability to get along with different people. He or she must be alert, imaginative, and quick-witted to handle the difficult situations that are a part of collection work. While collectors should be sympathetic to the billpayers' problems, they also must be persuasive to overcome some debtors' reluctance to fulfill their financial obligations. Because a collector spends most of the day on the telephone, a pleasant speaking voice and manner are important.

The demand for collection workers will be spurred by the expansion of credit card services.

The collector's job generally offers limited opportunities for advancement; competition for the few supervisory positions is keen. The collector with above-average abilities, however, may become a collection manager or supervisor of a staff of collectors. Some collection workers progress to other positions in the credit field, such as bank loan officer or outside representative for a collection agency. Further education, such as that available through professional associations of collectors or college courses, may be helpful for advanced positions in the credit and collection field.

Employment Outlook

The applicant with a background of high school business courses who can demonstrate effective telephone skills should find good job opportunities in the collection field. Demand is strongest for people who are personable, outgoing, and aggressive, for traits such as these are likely to lead to success on the job.

In the past, some jobseekers have been reluctant to accept collection work. More recently, however, the image of the occupation has improved. The role of the collector has expanded to include customer debt counseling, and collection methods have been modified in line with modern management techniques and recent consumer legislation. Despite this improved image, the number of persons seeking collection jobs is expected to fall short of the need for additional workers. Employers will need large numbers of collectors to fill vacancies created by turnover, which is relatively high in this occupation. In addition, new positions will open up as the occupation grows.

Employment opportunities should be best in collection agencies, where replacement needs continue to be high, and in retail trade firms, where earnings often are somewhat lower than the average. The strongest competition for collection positions will be in large metropolitan banks that generally offer higher salaries and better opportunities for advancement than other employers.

The demand for collection workers will be spurred by the expansion

of credit card services and the further growth of suburban retail stores. Delinquent accounts, unfortunately, are an unavoidable aspect of the credit system. As businesses extend attractive credit terms for the purchase of greater numbers of goods and services to more and more people, the number of delinquent accounts can be expected to increase. Additional collection workers will be required to service these accounts on a person-to-person basis.

Earnings and Working Conditions

Although earnings for collectors vary among employers, the limited information available indicates that beginning collectors earned about $125 a week in 1976, or about $6,500 a year. Managers of collection departments often earned $17,000 a year and more.

A survey by the American Collectors Association showed that telephone collectors working for collection agencies had an average monthly income of $823, or about $9,900 a year. Incomes of individual workers can vary substantially because collection agencies generally use some form of salary plus commission plan as an incentive to their collectors.

Commission schedules vary widely from agency to agency. A collector may be paid a relatively high salary with a low commission percentage or receive a low salary and a high rate on the money he or she collects for the agency. In some agencies, a quota is assigned to a collector or group of collectors and a bonus paid if the quota is reached. Earnings of a few collection workers are only from commissions.

In addition to salary, collectors receive the benefits common to other office occupations, such as paid vacations and health insurance. Those who occasionally make visits outside the office usually are furnished a company car or are paid expenses for using their own automobile.

Sources of Additional Information

Information on jobs as collection workers as well as other positions in a credit collection office is available from:

American Collectors Association, 4040 W. 70th St., Minneapolis, Minn. 55435.

CREDIT MANAGERS

(D.O.T. 168.168)

Nature of the Work

Both businesses and individuals may require credit (the postponement of payment until a future date) to meet their daily needs for a variety of goods and services. For most forms of credit, a credit manager has final authority to accept or reject a credit application.

In extending credit to a business (commercial credit), the credit manager, or an assistant, analyzes detailed financial reports submitted by the applicant, interviews a representative of the company about its management, and reviews credit agency reports to determine the firm's record in repaying debts. The manager also checks at banks where the company has deposits or previously was granted credit. In extending credit to individuals (consumer credit), detailed financial reports usually are not available. The credit manager must rely more on personal interviews, credit bureaus, and banks to provide information about the person applying for credit.

Particularly in large organizations, executive level credit managers are responsible for formulating a credit policy. They must establish financial standards to be met by applicants and thereby determine the amount of risk that their company will accept when offering its products or services for sale on credit. Managers usually cooperate with the sales department in developing a credit policy liberal enough to allow the company's sales to increase and yet strict enough to deny credit to customers whose ability to repay their debts is questionable. Many credit managers establish office procedures and supervise workers who gather information, analyze facts, and perform general office duties in a credit department; they include application clerks, collection workers, bookkeepers, and secretaries.

In smaller companies that handle a limited number of accounts, credit managers may do much of the work of granting credit themselves. They may interview applicants, analyze the information gained in the interview, and make the final approval. They frequently must contact customers who are unable or refuse to pay their debts. They do this through writing, telephoning, or personal contact. If these attempts at collection fail, credit managers may refer the account to a collection agency or assign an attorney to take legal action.

Places of Employment

About 53,000 persons worked as credit managers in 1976. About one-half were employed in wholesale and retail trade, but many others, about one-third of the total, worked for manufacturing firms and financial institutions.

Although credit is granted throughout the United States, most credit managers work in urban areas where many financial and business establishments are located.

Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement

A college degree is becoming increasingly important for entry level jobs in credit management. Employers usually seek persons who have majored in business administration, economics, or accounting, but may also hire graduates holding liberal arts degrees. Some employers promote high school graduates to credit manager positions if they have experience in credit collection or processing credit information.

Newly hired workers normally begin as management trainees and work under the guidance of more experienced personnel in the credit department. Here they gain a thorough understanding of the company's credit procedures and policies. They may analyze previous credit transactions to learn how to recognize which applicants should prove to be good customers. Trainees also learn to deal with credit bureaus, banks, and

A college degree is becoming increasingly important for entry level jobs in credit management.

other businesses that can provide information on the past credit dealings of their customers.

Many formal training programs are available through the educational branches of the associations that serve the credit and finance field. This training includes home study, college and university programs, and special instruction to improve beginners' skills and keep experienced credit managers aware of new developments in their field.

A person interested in a career as a credit manager should be able to analyze detailed information and draw valid conclusions based on this analysis. Because it is necessary to maintain good customer relationships, a pleasant personality and the ability to speak and write effectively also are characteristics of the successful credit manager.

The work performed by credit managers allows them to become familiar with almost every phase of their company's business. Highly qualified and experienced managers can advance to top level executive positions. However, in small and medium-sized companies, such opportunities are limited.

Employment Outlook

Through the mid-1980's employment is expected to grow more slowly than the average for all occupations. Despite this relatively slow growth, many jobs will become available each year due to the need to replace persons who leave the occupation. Although there will be opportunities throughout the country, employment prospects should continue to be best for well-qualified jobseekers in metropolitan areas.

The volume of credit extended rose very rapidly during the past decade. In the years ahead, businesses can be expected to require increasing amounts of credit to secure raw materials for production and obtain finished goods for eventual resale. It is in the area of business credit where demand for credit managers will be strongest.

Consumers, whose personal incomes have risen, are expected to finance greater numbers of high-priced items. In addition, the use of credit for everyday purchases is expected to grow as demand increases for recreation and household goods as well as for consumer services. Despite increases in consumer debt, the use of computers for storing and retrieving information will enable this greater volume of information to be processed more efficiently. The use of telecommunications networks enables retail outlets to have immediate access to a central credit office, regardless of distance.

Another factor that is expected to slow the growth in the number of credit managers is the increased use of bank credit cards. As stores substitute bank credit cards for their own charge accounts, credit departments may be reduced or eliminated.

Earnings and Working Conditions

In 1976, credit manager trainees who had a college degree earned annual salaries that ranged from about $10,000 to $11,000, depending on the type of employer and the geographic location of the job.

Assistant credit managers averaged about $12,000 to $14,000 a year and credit managers had average earnings of about $17,000. Individuals in top-level positions often earn over $40,000 a year.

Credit managers normally work the standard workweek of their company—35-40 hours, but some work longer hours. In wholesale and retail trade, for example, a seasonal increase in credit sales can produce a greater work volume. Some credit managers attend conferences sponsored by industry and professional organizations where managers meet to develop and discuss new techniques for the management of a credit department.

Sources of Additional Information

Information about a career in consumer credit may be obtained from:

International Consumer Credit Association, 375 Jackson Ave., St. Louis, Mo. 63130.

National Consumer Finance Association, 1000 16th St., NW., Washington, D.C. 20036.

For information about training programs available in commercial credit, write:

National Association of Credit Management, 475 Park Ave. South, New York, N.Y. 10016.

INDUSTRIAL TRAFFIC MANAGERS

(D.O.T. 184.168)

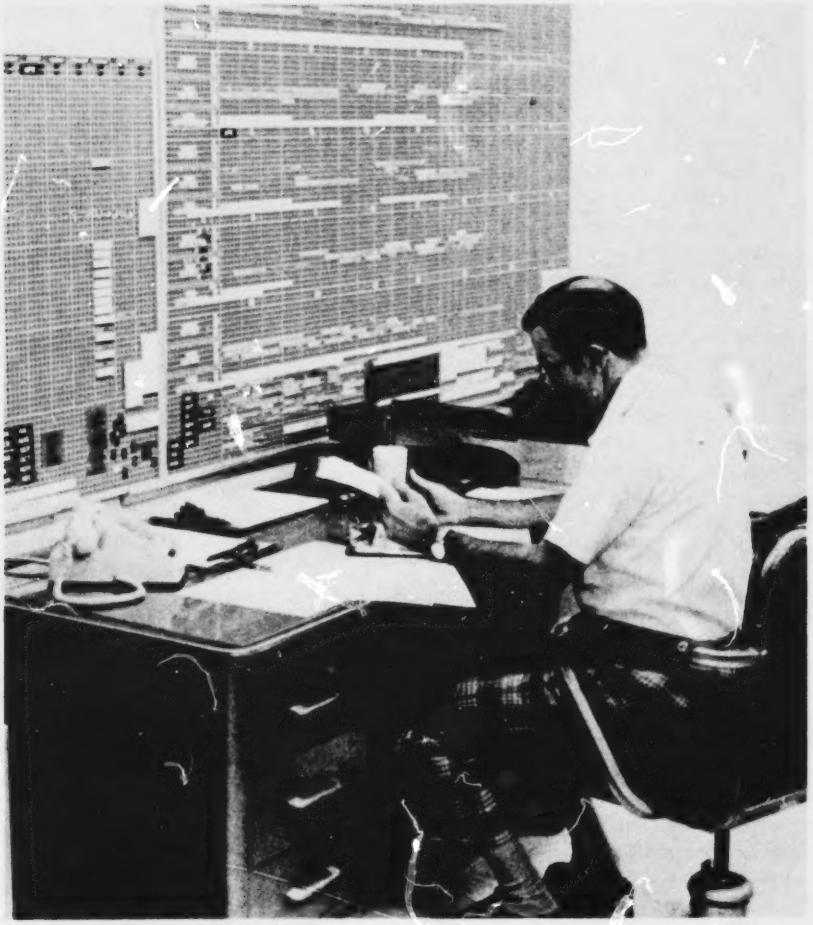
Nature of the Work

Industrial firms want to receive raw materials and deliver customers' goods promptly, safely, and with minimum cost. Arranging for the transportation of materials and finished products is the job of an industrial traffic manager. Industrial traffic managers analyze various transportation possibilities and choose the most efficient type for their companies' needs—rail, air, road, water, pipeline, or some combination. Then they select the route and the particular carrier. To make their decision, traffic managers consider factors such as freight classifications and regulations, freight charges, time schedules, size of shipments, and loss and damage ratios. (This statement does not cover traffic managers who sell transportation services for railroads, airlines, trucking firms, and other freight carriers.)

Activities of industrial traffic managers range from checking freight bills to deciding whether the company should buy its own fleet of rail cars or trucks or contract for services. They route and trace shipments, arrange with carriers for transportation services, prepare bills of lading and other shipping documents, and handle claims for lost or damaged goods. Traffic managers keep records of shipments, freight rates, commodity classifications, and applicable government regulations. They also must stay informed about changing transportation technology.

Traffic managers often consult with other company officials about the firm's transportation needs. They may, for example, work with production department personnel to plan shipping schedules, or with members of the purchasing department to determine what quantities of goods can be transported most economically.

Since many aspects of transportation are subject to Federal, State, and local government regulations, traffic managers must know about these and any other legal matters that apply to their companies' shipping operations. High level traffic managers represent their companies before ratemaking and regulatory bodies such as the Interstate Commerce Commission, State commissions, and local traffic bureaus.



Industrial traffic managers arrange the transportation of materials and finished products.

Places of Employment

More than 21,000 persons were involved in industrial traffic management in 1976. Although most jobs are found in manufacturing firms, some traffic managers work for wholesalers or for large retail stores. Some traffic managers work for consulting firms that handle transportation problems for clients; a few run their own consulting businesses.

Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement

Although high school graduates with experience in traffic departments sometimes are hired as traffic managers, a college education is increasingly important in this field. For some kinds of work, college training is required. To argue cases before the Interstate Commerce Commission, for example, a traffic manager must meet standards that include at least 2 years of college. Some employers prefer graduates of technical and trade school programs in traffic management. Others seek college and university graduates who have either majored, or taken courses, in transportation logistics, physical distribution, management, economics, statistics, marketing, computer science, and commercial law.

Industrial traffic training is available through colleges and universities, technical and trade schools, and seminars sponsored by professional associations. More than 100 colleges and universities offer programs or courses in traffic management. College courses in this field often are offered as part of a major program in business administration. In some colleges and universities, however, traffic management is taught in departments of logistics, transportation, or marketing and distribution. In addition to degree programs at the associate, baccalaureate, and graduate levels, a number of colleges and universities offer workshops, seminars, and other short-term programs in transportation and traffic management.

Industrial traffic managers should be able to analyze numerical and technical data such as freight rates and classifications to solve transportation problems. The job also requires the ability to work independently and to present facts and figures in a convincing manner.

Newly hired traffic specialists often complete shipping documents and calculate freight charges. After gaining experience, they do more technical work such as analyzing transportation statistics. A competent worker may advance to a supervisory job such as supervisor of rates and routes; a few are promoted to assistant traffic manager and eventually to traffic manager. Industrial traffic managers can sometimes help their chances for advancement by participating in company-sponsored training programs or taking advanced courses in traffic management. A growing number are certified by the American Society of Traffic and Transportation, Inc.

Employment Outlook

Industrial traffic management is a relatively small occupation and is expected to grow about as fast as the average for all occupations through the mid-1980's. Openings will occur each year as new jobs are created, and as traffic managers die, retire, or leave the field for other reasons. College graduates with a major in traffic management or transportation can expect first consideration for the available jobs.

Growth in the occupation will stem from an increasing emphasis on reducing the cost of receiving raw materials and distributing finished products. As the distance between markets becomes greater and rate schedules and regulations governing transportation more complex, manufacturers increasingly will require the expertise of the traffic manager.

Earnings and Working Conditions

Industrial traffic specialists' salaries started at about $11,000 a year in 1976, according to the limited information available. Although earnings of experienced traffic managers vary, in general they are much higher than the average for all nonsupervisory workers in private industry, except farming. Some traffic executives earned $50,000 a year or more.

Although industrial traffic managers usually have a standard workweek, some of them have to spend time outside regular working hours preparing reports, attending meetings, and traveling to hearings before State and Federal regulatory agencies.

Sources of Additional Information

Answers to specific questions about a career in traffic management are available from:

American Society of Traffic and Transportation, Inc., 547 West Jackson Blvd., Chicago, Ill. 60606.

For a list of colleges, universities, and technical institutes that offer instruction in transportation and related areas, see: *Directory of Transportation Education*, published in 1976 by the U.S. Department of Transportation (Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office). The directory is available in many schools and public libraries.

For a copy of the American Trucking Association's *Directory of Transportation Education in U.S. Colleges and Universities*, write:

American Trucking Associations, Inc., 1616 P St. NW., Washington, D.C. 20036.

For information on proprietary schools that offer programs in traffic management, contact:

National Association of Trade and Technical Schools, 2021 L St. NW., Washington, D.C. 20036.

LAWYERS

(D.O.T. 110.108, .118, and 119.168)

Laws permeate every aspect of our society. They regulate the entire spectrum of relationships among individuals, groups, businesses, and governments. They define rights as well as restrictions, covering such diverse human activities as judging and punishing criminals, granting patents, drawing up business contracts, paying taxes, settling labor disputes, constructing buildings, and administering wills.

Because social needs and attitudes are continually changing, the legal system that regulates our social, political, and economic relationships also is subject to change. The task of keeping the law responsive to human needs is the work of lawyers. Also called attorneys, lawyers are the link between the legal system and society. To perform this role, they must understand the world around them and be sensitive to the numerous aspects of society that are touched by the law. They must comprehend not only the words of a particular statute, but the human circumstances it addresses as well.

As our body of laws grows more voluminous and complex, as the legal system takes on new regulatory tasks in social welfare, racial integration, energy conservation, and other areas, the work of lawyers takes on wider significance.

Nature of the Work

Lawyers perform a wide variety of tasks, but certain basic activities are common to nearly every attorney's work. Probably the most fundamental of all is interpretation of the law. Every attorney, whether representing the defendant in a murder trial or the plaintiff (suing party) in a lawsuit,

combines an understanding of the relevant laws with knowledge of the facts in the particular case in order to determine how the first affects the second. Based on this determination, the attorney decides what courses of action would best serve the interests of the party he or she represents.

In order to interpret the law knowledgeably, lawyers do research. They must stay abreast of their field, in both legal and nonlegal matters. An attorney representing electronics manufacturers, for example, must follow trade journals as well as the latest Federal regulations affecting his or her clients. Attorneys in the State Department must remain well-versed in current events and international law, while divorce lawyers spend a certain portion of their time reading about the changing role of the family in modern society. Research also includes specific, in-depth reading on the legal questions or substantive matters of an individual case. In any event, the overwhelming volume of literature to be digested requires a lawyer to conduct research efficiently, quickly picking out and evaluating the substance of a particular article or court case.

Usually a lawyer's work also involves contact with people. Attorneys consult with their clients to determine the details of their specific problems, advise them of the law, and suggest actions that might or must be taken. To be effective, a lawyer learns to deal with people in a courteous, efficient fashion.

Finally, most lawyers must do some writing in the course of their work. This may take the form of reports, legal briefs, or administrative paperwork. In all cases, the attorney calls upon his or her ability to communicate clearly and precisely.

The more detailed aspects of the legal profession depend upon the lawyer's individual field and position. Most lawyers are engaged in general practice and handle all kinds of legal work for clients. They counsel the individual who wants to buy property, make a will, sign a contract, or settle an estate. These lawyers perform whatever tasks are necessary to help their client comply with the law.

Corporate lawyers reviewing legal matters pertaining to the company.

A significant number specialize in one branch of law, such as corporate, criminal, labor, patent, real estate, tax, or international law. Communications lawyers, for example, may represent radio and television stations in their dealings with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). They help established stations prepare and file license renewal applications, employment reports, and other documents required by the FCC on a regular basis. They also keep their clients informed of changes in FCC regulations. Communications lawyers give similar assistance to individuals or corporations wishing to buy or sell a station or establish a new one.

Other lawyers specialize in representing public utilities before the Federal Power Commission (FPC) and other regulatory agencies. For example, they handle matters involving the reasonableness of utility rates. They help a firm develop its case, assist in preparing strategy, arguments, and testimony, prepare the case for presentation at a trial or administrative hearing, and argue the case. These lawyers also keep clients informed about changes in regulations and advise them as to the legality of their actions.

Private practitioners specialize in other areas, too. Some draw up wills, trusts, contracts, mortgages, and other legal documents; conduct out-of-court negotiations; and do investigative and other legal work to prepare for trials. Some may act as trustees by managing a person's property and funds, or as executors by seeing that the provisions of their client's will are carried out. A small number of lawyers devote themselves entirely to courtroom work. An increasing number handle only so-called public interest cases. These cases, either civil or criminal, have a potential impact extending well beyond the individual client. Attorneys who take these cases hope to use them as a vehicle for legal and social reform.

Some lawyers are employed full time by a single client. Known as house counsel, these lawyers usually work for a corporate firm, advising

and acting on legal questions that arise from the company's business activities. These questions may involve patents for new productions, FTC regulations, a business contract with another company, or a collective bargaining agreement with a union.

Attorneys employed at the various levels of government constitute still another category. Criminal lawyers may work in the office of a State attorney general; they also may be employed by a prosecutor's or public defender's office, or by the court itself. At the Federal level, attorneys perform investigations for the Justice Department and regulatory agencies. Lawyers at every level of government also help develop laws and programs; they prepare drafts of proposed legislation, establish law enforcement procedures, and argue cases.

Many people who have legal training do not work as lawyers but use their knowledge of law in other occupations. They may, for example, be journalists, management consultants, financial analysts, insurance claim adjusters, tax collectors, probation officers, and credit investigators. A legal background also is an asset to those seeking or holding public office.

Places of Employment

About 396,000 persons worked as lawyers in 1976. Almost three-fourths of them, 280,000, practiced privately, with about 40 percent in solo practice and the other 60 percent working in law firms. Of the remaining 116,000, about one-third were employed as house counsel by various business firms; one-fourth worked in the Federal Government; the remainder held positions in State and local government. In addition, about 8,000 lawyers taught full or part time in law schools. Some salaried lawyers also have independent practices; others do legal work part time while in another occupation.

Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement

In order to practice law in the courts of any State, a person must be admitted to its bar. Applicants for admission to the bar must pass a written examination; however, a few States drop this requirement for graduates of their own law schools. Lawyers who have been admitted to the bar in one State occasionally may be admitted in another without taking an examination provided they meet that State's standards of good moral character and have a specified period of legal experience. Each Federal court or agency sets its own qualifications for those practicing before it.

To qualify for the bar examination in most States, an applicant must have completed 3 years of college and have graduated from a law school approved by the American Bar Association (ABA) or the proper State authorities. (ABA approval signifies that the law school meets the minimum standards necessary to allow its graduates to take the bar exam and practice law in any State. Graduates of nonapproved schools are restricted to the State in which the school is located.) A few States accept the study of law wholly in a law office or in combination with study in a law school; only California accepts the study of law by correspondence as qualification for taking the bar exam. Several States require registration and approval of students by the State Board of Examiners, either before they enter law school or during the early years of legal study. In a few States, candidates must complete clerkships before they are admitted to the bar.

Although there is no nationwide bar exam, most States and the District of Columbia participate in the Multistate Bar Examination (MBE). The MBE, covering issues of broad interest, is given in addition to the State bar exam; how the MBE score is treated varies from State to State.

The required college and law school education usually takes 7 years of full-time study after high school—4 years of undergraduate study followed by 3 years in law school. Although a number of law schools accept students after 3 years of college, an increasing number require applicants to have a bachelor's degree. To meet the needs of students who can attend only part time, a number of law schools have night or part-time divisions which usually require 4 years of study. In 1976, about one-fifth of all graduates of ABA-approved schools were part-time students.

Competition for admission to law school has become intense in the last few years. Enrollments rose very rapidly between 1969 and 1972, and, according to one estimate, applications outnumbered available openings by almost 10 to 1 in the mid-1970's. Although the increase in enrollments is expected to slow by the 1980's, law school admission will remain the first of several hurdles for prospective lawyers.

Preparation for a career as a lawyer really begins in college. Although there is no such thing as a "prelaw major," the undergraduate program almost always makes a difference. Certain courses and activities are desirable because they give the student the skills needed to succeed both in law school and in the profession. Essential skills—the ability to write, to read and analyse, to think conceptually and logically, and to communicate verbally—are learned during high school and college. The best undergraduate program is one that cultivates these skills while at the same time broadening the student's view of the world. Majors in the social sciences, natural sciences, and humanities all fill the bill, as long as the student does not specialize too narrowly.

Students interested in a particular aspect of the law may find it helpful to take related courses; for example, engineering and science courses for the prospective patent attorney, and accounting for the future tax lawyer. In addition, typing is advisable simply for convenience in law school.

Acceptance by most law schools depends on the applicant's ability to demonstrate an aptitude for the study of law, usually through good grades and the Law School Admission Test (LSAT), administered by the Educational Testing Service. In 1976, 163 law schools had American Bar Association approval. Others—chiefly night schools—were approved by State authorities only.

The first year or year and a half of

law school generally is devoted to fundamental courses such as constitutional law, contracts, property law, and judicial procedure. In the remaining time, students may elect specialized courses in fields such as tax, labor, or corporation law. Practical experience often is acquired by participation in school-sponsored legal aid activities, in the school's practice court where students conduct trials under the supervision of experienced lawyers, and through writing on legal issues for the school's law journal. Graduates receive the degree of *juris doctor* (J.D.) from most schools as the first professional degree. Advanced study often is desirable for those planning to specialize, do research, or teach in law schools.

The practice of law involves a great deal of responsibility. Persons planning careers in law should like to work with people and ideas, and be able to win the confidence of their clients.

Most beginning lawyers start in salaried positions, although some go into independent practice immediately after passing the bar examination. Newly hired salaried attorneys usually act as research assistants (law clerks) to experienced lawyers or judges. After several years of progressively responsible salaried employment, many lawyers go into practice for themselves. Some lawyers, after years of practice, become judges.

Employment Outlook

A rapid increase in the number of law school graduates has created keen competition for the available jobs. In the years ahead, the number of graduates is expected to increase further and intensify this competition.

Employers will be selective in hiring new lawyers. Graduates of well-known law schools and those who rank high in their classes should find salaried positions with law firms, on the legal staffs of corporations and government agencies, and as law clerks for judges. Graduates of less prominent schools and those with lower scholastic ratings will experience some difficulty in finding salaried jobs. However, many will find opportunities in fields where legal training is an asset but not normally a requirement.

The employment of lawyers is expected to grow faster than the average for other occupations through the mid-1980's as increased business activity and population create a demand for attorneys to deal with a growing number of legal questions. Supreme Court decisions extending the right to counsel for persons accused of lesser crimes, the growth of legal action in the areas of consumer protection, the environment, and safety, and an expected increase in the use of legal services by middle-income groups through prepaid legal service programs also should provide employment opportunities. Other jobs will be created by the need to replace lawyers who die, retire, or leave the occupation for other reasons.

Prospects for establishing a new practice probably will continue to be best in small towns and expanding suburban areas, as long as there already exists an active market for legal services in which the new lawyer can find clients. In such communities competition is likely to be less than in big cities and new lawyers may find it easier to become known to potential clients; also, rent and other business costs are somewhat lower. Nevertheless, starting a new practice will remain an expensive and risky proposition that should be weighed carefully. Salaried positions will be limited largely to urban areas where the chief employers of legal talent—government agencies, law firms, and big corporations—are concentrated.

Earnings and Working Conditions

Lawyers entering practice in 1976 earned a wide range of starting salaries—from about $10,000 to $23,000 a year. Most fell in the $15,000 to $18,000 range. Factors affecting the salaries offered to new graduates include: their academic records; type, size, and location of their employers; and whether the new lawyer has any specialized educational background that the employer requires. The field of law makes a difference, too. Patent lawyers, for example, tend to earn more than general corporate attorneys. Lawyers with at least a year's experience working in manufacturing and business firms earned about $18,000 a year; those with a few years of experience earned $30,000 or more annually. In the Federal Government, annual starting salaries for attorneys in 1977 were $14,097 or $17,056, depending upon academic and personal qualifications. Federal attorneys with some experience earned $24,308 or more a year.

Beginning lawyers engaged in legal-aid work usually receive the lowest starting salaries. Many lawyers starting their own practices may earn little more than expenses during the first few years and may need to work part time in other occupations.

Lawyers on salary receive increases as they assume greater responsibility. Incomes of lawyers in private practice usually grow as their practices develop. Private practitioners who are partners in law firms generally earn more than those who practice alone.

Lawyers often work long hours and are under considerable pressure when a case is being tried. In addition, they must keep abreast of the latest laws and court decisions. However, since lawyers in private practice can determine their own hours and workload, many stay in practice well past the usual retirement age.

Sources of Additional Information

Persons considering law as a career will find information on law schools and prelaw study in the *Prelaw Handbook*, published annually (Princeton, N.J.: Educational Testing Service). Copies may be available in public or school libraries. In addition, many colleges and universities have a prelaw advisor who counsels undergraduates about their undergraduate course work, the LSAT, law school applications, and other matters.

Information on law schools and law as a career is available from:

Information Services, The American Bar Association, 1155 East 60th St., Chicago, Ill. 60637. (There may be a slight charge for publications.)

Information on law school accreditation is available from:

Association of American Law Schools, Suite 370, 1 Dupont Circle NW., Washington, D.C. 20036.

For advice on financial aid, contact a law school financial aid officer.

The specific requirements for admission to the bar in a particular State may be obtained at the State capital from the clerk of the Supreme Court or the secretary of the Board of Bar Examiners.

MARKETING RESEARCH WORKERS

(D.O.T. 050.088)

Nature of the Work

Businesses require a great deal of information to make sound decisions on how to market their products. Marketing research workers provide much of this information by analyzing available data on products and sales. If additional information is required but not available, they conduct marketing surveys, by interviewing those likely to have the needed data. They also prepare sales forecasts and make recommendations on product design and advertising.

Most marketing research starts with the collection of facts from sources such as company records, published materials, and experts on the subject under investigation. For example, marketing research workers making sales forecasts may begin by studying the growth of sales volume in several different cities. This growth may then be traced to increases in population, size of the company's sales force, or amount of money spent on advertising. Other marketing research workers may study changes in the quantity of company goods on store shelves or make door-to-door surveys to get information on company products.

Marketing research workers often are concerned with customers' opinions and tastes. For example, to help decide on the design and price of a new line of television sets, marketing research workers may survey consumers to find out what styles and price ranges are most popular. This type of survey usually is supervised by marketing researchers who specialize in consumer goods; that is, merchandise sold to the general public. They may be helped by statisticians who select a group (or sample) to be interviewed and "motivational research" specialists who phrase questions to produce reliable information. Once the investigation is underway, the marketing researcher may supervise the interviewers as well as direct the office workers who tabulate and analyze the information collected.

Marketing surveys on products used by business and industrial firms may be conducted differently from surveys for consumer goods. Marketing researchers often conduct the interviews themselves to gather opinions of the product. They also may speak to company officials about new uses for it. They must therefore have specialized knowledge of both marketing techniques and the industrial uses of the product.

Places of Employment

About 25,000 full-time marketing research workers were employed in 1976. Most jobs for marketing research workers are found in manufacturing companies, advertising agencies, and independent research organizations. Large numbers are employed by stores, radio and television firms, and newspapers; others work for university research centers and government agencies. Marketing research organizations range in size from one-person enterprises to firms with a hundred employees or more.

New York City has a large number of marketing research workers. Many major advertising agencies, independent marketing organizations, and central offices of large manufacturers are located there. Another large concentration is in Chicago. However, marketing research workers are employed in many other cities as well—wherever there are central offices of large manufacturing and sales organizations.

Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement

Although a bachelor's degree usually is sufficient for trainees, graduate education is necessary for many specialized positions in marketing research. Graduate study usually is required for advancement, and a siz-

Market research workers often test reactions to a company's product.

able number of market researchers have a master's degree in business administration or other graduate degree as well as a bachelor's degree in marketing. Some people qualify for jobs through previous experience in other types of research; university teachers of marketing or statistics, for example, may be hired to head marketing research departments in business firms or advertising agencies.

Bachelor's programs in marketing and related fields, including courses in statistics, English composition, speech, psychology, and economics, are valuable preparation for work in marketing research. Some marketing research positions require specialized skills such as engineering, or substantial sales experience and a thorough knowledge of the company's products. Knowledge of data processing is helpful because of the increasing use of computers in sales forecasting, distribution, and cost analysis.

College graduates may find their first job in any of a number of places: in the market research department of a large company, with a research firm, in a government planning agency, or even in a university marketing department.

Trainees usually start as research assistants or junior analysts. At first, they may do considerable clerical work, such as copying data from published sources, editing and coding questionnaires, and tabulating survey returns. They also learn to conduct interviews and write reports on survey findings. As they gain experience, assistants and junior analysts may assume responsibility for specific marketing research projects, or advance to supervisory positions. An exceptionally able worker may become marketing research director or vice president for marketing and sales.

Either alone or as part of a team, marketing research workers must be able to analyze problems objectively and apply various techniques to their solution. As advisers to management, they should be able to write clear reports informing company officials of their findings.

Employment Outlook

Opportunities should be best for applicants with graduate training in marketing research or statistics. The growing complexity of marketing research techniques also may expand opportunities in this field for psychologists, economists, and other social scientists.

Marketing research employment rises as new products and services are developed, particularly when business activity and personal incomes are expanding rapidly. In periods of slow economic growth, however, the reduced demand for marketing services may limit the hiring of research workers.

Over the long run, population growth and the increased variety of goods and services that businesses and individuals will require are expected to stimulate a high level of marketing activity. As a result, employment of marketing research workers is expected to grow much faster than the average for other occupations through the mid-1980's.

Competition among manufacturers of both consumer and industrial products will make the appraising of marketing situations increasingly important. As techniques improve and statistical data accumulate, company officials are likely to turn more often to marketing research workers for information and advice.

Earnings and Working Conditions

Salaries for marketing research trainees were about $11,000 a year in 1976, according to the limited information available. Persons with master's degrees in business administration and related fields usually started with salaries around $15,000 a year. Starting salaries varied according to the type, size, and location of the firm as well as the exact nature of the position. Generally, though, starting salaries were somewhat higher and promotion somewhat slower than in other occupations requiring similar training.

Experienced workers such as senior analysts received salaries over $19,000 a year. Earnings were highest, however, for workers in management positions of great responsibility. Directors of marketing research earned well over $25,000 a year in 1976.

Marketing research workers usually work in modern, centrally located offices. Some, especially those employed by independent research firms, may travel for their work. Also, they may frequently work under pressure and for long hours to meet deadlines.

Sources of Additional Information

A pamphlet, "Careers in Marketing" (Monograph Series No. 4), may be purchased for $1.50 from:

American Marketing Association, 222 South Riverside Plaza, Chicago, Ill. 60606.

PERSONNEL AND LABOR RELATIONS WORKERS

(D.O.T. 166.088 through .268; 169.118)

Nature of the Work

Attracting the best employees available and matching them to the jobs they can do best is important for the success of any organization. Today, most businesses are much too large for close contact between owners and their employees. Instead, personnel and labor relations workers provide the link between management and employees—assisting management to make effective use of employees' skills, and helping employees to find satisfaction in their jobs and working conditions. Although some jobs in this field require only limited contact with people outside the office, most involve frequent contact with other people. Dealing with people is an essential part of the job.

Personnel workers and labor relations workers concentrate on different aspects of employer-employee relations. Personnel workers interview, select, and recommend applicants to fill job openings. They handle wage and salary administration,

training and career development, and employee benefits. "Labor relations" usually means union-management relations, and people who specialize in this field work for the most part in unionized business firms and government agencies. They help officials prepare for collective bargaining sessions, participate in contract negotiations with the union, and handle labor relations matters that come up every day.

In a small company, personnel work consists mostly of interviewing and hiring, and one person usually can handle it all. By contrast, a large organization needs an entire staff, which might include recruiters, interviewers, counselors, job analysts, wage and salary analysts, education and training specialists, and labor relations specialists, as well as technical and clerical workers.

Personnel work often begins with the *personnel recruiter* or *employment interviewer* (D.O.T. 166.268), who works on a person-to-person basis with present and prospective employees. Recruiters travel around the country, often to college campuses, in the search for promising job applicants. Interviewers talk to applicants, and select and recommend those who appear qualified to fill vacancies. They often administer tests to applicants and interpret the results. Hiring and placement specialists need to be thoroughly familiar with the organization and its personnel policies, for they must be prepared to discuss wages, working conditions, and promotional opportunities with prospective and newly hired employees. They also need to keep informed about equal employment opportunity and affirmative action guidelines. Equal employment opportunity is a complex and sensitive area of personnel work which in some large organizations is handled by special EEO counselors or coordinators. The work of employment counselors, which is similar in a number of ways, is described in a separate statement elsewhere in the *Handbook*.

Job analysts (D.O.T. 166.068) and *salary and wage administrators* (D.O.T. 169.118) do very exacting work. Job analysts collect and analyze detailed information on jobs, job qualifications, and worker characteristics in order to prepare job descriptions, sometimes called position classifications, that tell exactly what the duties of a job are and what training and skills it requires. Whenever a government agency or large business firm introduces a new job or evaluates existing ones, it calls upon the expert knowledge of the job analyst. Accurate information about job duties also is required when a firm evaluates its pay system and considers changes in wages and salaries. Establishing and maintaining pay systems is the principal job of wage administrators. They devise ways of making sure that pay rates within the firm are fair and equitable, and conduct surveys to see how their pay rates compare with those elsewhere. Being sure that the firm's pay system complies with laws and regulations is another part of the job, one that requires knowledge of compensation structures and labor law.

Training specialists supervise or conduct training sessions, prepare manuals and other materials for these courses, and look into new methods of training. They also counsel employees on training opportunities, which may include on-the-job, apprentice, supervisory, or management training.

Employee-benefits supervisors and other personnel specialists handle the employer's benefits program, which often includes health insurance, life insurance, disability insurance, and pension plans. These workers also coordinate a wide range of employee services, including cafeterias and snack bars, health rooms, recreational facilities, newsletters and communications, and counseling for work-related personal problems. Counseling employees who are approaching retirement age is a particularly important part of the job of these workers.

Occupational safety and health programs are handled in various ways. Quite often, in small companies especially, accident prevention and industrial safety are the responsibility of the personnel department—or of the labor relations specialist, if the union has a safety representative. Increasingly, however, there is a separate safety department under the direction of a safety and health professional, generally a safety engineer or industrial hygienist. (The work of occupational safety and health workers is discussed elsewhere in the *Handbook*.)

Labor relations specialists (D.O.T. 169.118) advise management on all aspects of union-management relations. When the contract is up for negotiation, they provide background information and technical support, a job that requires extensive knowledge of economics, labor law, and collective bargaining trends. Actual negotiation of the agreement is conducted at the top level, with the director of labor relations or other top-ranking official serving as the employer's representative, but members of the company's labor relations staff play an important role throughout the negotiations.

Much of the everyday work of the labor relations staff concerns interpretation and administration of the contract, the grievance procedures in particular. Members of the labor relations staff might work with the union on seniority rights under the layoff procedure set forth in the contract, for example. Later in the day, they might meet with the union steward about a worker's grievance. Doing the job well means staying abreast of current developments in labor law, including arbitration decisions, and maintaining continuing liaison with union officials.

Personnel workers in government agencies generally do the same kind of work as those in large business firms. There are some differences, however. Public personnel workers deal with employees whose jobs are governed by civil service regulations. Civil service jobs are strictly classified as to duties, training, and pay. This requires a great deal of emphasis on job analysis and wage and salary classification; many people in public personnel work spend their time classifying and evaluating jobs, or devising, administering, and scoring competitive examinations given to job applicants.

Knowledge of rules and regulations pertaining to affirmative action

and equal opportunity programs is important in public personnel work. In 1972, the U.S. Civil Service Commission established a specialization for Federal personnel workers concerned with promoting equal opportunity in hiring, training, and advancement. Similar attention to equal employment opportunity, accompanied by a need for qualified staff, is evident in State and local government agencies.

Labor relations is an increasingly important specialty in public personnel administration. Labor relations in this field have changed considerably in recent years, as union strength among government workers has grown. This has created a need for more and better trained workers to handle negotiations, grievances, and arbitration cases on behalf of Federal, State, and local government agencies.

Places of Employment

In 1976, about 335,000 people were personnel and labor relations workers. Nearly 3 out of 4 worked in private industry, for manufacturers, banks, insurance companies, airlines, department stores, and other business concerns. Some worked for private employment agencies, including executive job-search agencies, "office temporaries" agencies, and others.

A large number of personnel and labor relations workers, over 90,000 in 1976, worked for Federal, State, and local government agencies. Most of these were in personnel administration; they handled recruitment, interviewing, testing, job classification, training, and other personnel matters for the Nation's 15 million public employees. Some were on the staff of the U.S. Employment Service and State employment agencies. Still others worked for agencies that oversee compliance with labor laws. Some, for example, were wage-hour compliance officers; their work is described in another part of the *Handbook*, in the statement on health and regulatory inspectors (Government). Other public employees in this field carried out research in economics, labor law, personnel practices, and related subjects, and sought new ways of ensuring that workers' rights under the law are understood and protected.

In comparison with private industry, labor unions do not employ a large number of professionally trained labor relations workers. An elected union official generally handles labor relations matters at the company level. At national and international union headquarters, however, the research and education staff usually includes specialists with a degree in industrial and labor relations, economics, or law.

A few personnel and labor relations workers are in business for themselves as management consultants or labor-management relations experts. In addition, some people in the field teach college or university courses in personnel administration, industrial relations, and related subjects.

Most jobs for personnel and labor relations workers are located in the highly industrialized sections of the country.

Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement

Many employers seek to fill beginning positions in personnel and labor relations with college graduates. Some employers look for graduates who have majored in personnel administration or industrial and labor relations, while others prefer college graduates with a general business background. Still other employers feel that a well-rounded liberal arts education is the best preparation for personnel work. A college major in personnel administration, political science, or public administration can be an asset in looking for a job with a government agency.

At least 200 colleges and universities have programs leading to a degree in the field of personnel and labor relations. (While personnel administration is widely taught, the number of programs that focus primarily on labor relations is quite small.) In addition, many schools offer course work in closely related fields. An interdisciplinary background is appropriate for work in this area, and a combination of courses in the social sciences, behavioral sciences, business, and economics is useful.

Prospective personnel workers might include courses in personnel management, business administration, public administration, psychology, sociology, political science, economics, and statistics. Courses in labor law, collective bargaining, labor economics, labor history, and industrial psychology provide valuable backgound for the prospective labor relations worker.

Graduate study in industrial or labor relations is often required for work in labor relations. While a law degree seldom is required for jobs at the entry level, most of the people with responsibility for contract negotiations are lawyers, and a combination of industrial relations courses and a law degree is becoming highly desirable.

A college education is important, but it is not the only way to enter personnel work. Some people enter the field at the clerical level, and advance to professional positions on the basis of experience. They often find it helpful to take college courses part time, however.

New personnel workers usually enter formal or on-the-job training programs to learn how to classify jobs, interview applicants, or administer employee benefits. After the training period, new workers are assigned to specific areas in the company's employee relations department. After gaining experience, they usually can advance within their own company or transfer to another employer. At this point, some people move from personnel to labor relations work.

A growing number of people enter the labor relations field directly, as trainees. They usually are graduates of master's degree programs in industrial relations, or may have a law degree. Quite a few people, however, begin in personnel work, gain experience in that area, and subsequently move into a labor relations job.

Workers in the middle ranks of a large organization often transfer to a top job in a smaller one. Employees with exceptional ability may be promoted to executive positions, such as director of personnel or director of labor relations.

Personnel and labor relations workers should speak and write effectively and be able to work with people of all levels of education and experience. They also must be able to see both the employee's and the employer's points of view. In addition, they should be able to work as part of a team. They need supervisory abilities and must be able to accept responsibility. Integrity and fairmindedness are important qualities for people in personnel and labor relations work. A persuasive, congenial personality can be a great asset.

Employment Outlook

The number of personnel and labor relations workers is expected to grow faster than the average for all occupations through 1985, as employers, increasingly aware of the benefits to be derived from good labor-management relations, continue to support sound, capably staffed employee relations programs. In addition to new jobs created by growth of the occupation, many openings will become available each year because of the need to replace workers who die, retire, or leave their jobs for other reasons.

Legislation setting standards for employment practices in the areas of occupational safety and health, equal employment opportunity, and pensions has stimulated demand for personnel and labor relations workers. Continued growth is foreseen, as employers throughout the country review existing programs in each of these areas and, in many cases, establish entirely new ones. This has created job opportunities for people with appropriate expertise. The effort to end discriminatory employment practices, for example, has led to scrutiny of the testing, selection, placement, and promotion procedures in many companies and government agencies. The findings are causing a number of employers to modify these procedures, and to take steps to raise the level of professionalism in their personnel departments.

Substantial employment growth is foreseen in the area of public personnel administration. Opportunities probably will be best in State and local government, areas that are expected to experience strong employment growth over the next decade. By contrast, Federal employment will grow slowly. Moreover, as union strength among public employees continues to grow, State and local agencies will need many more workers qualified to deal with labor relations. Enactment of collective bargaining legislation for State and local government employees could greatly stimulate demand for labor relations workers knowledgeable about public sector negotiations.

Although the number of jobs in both personnel and labor relations is projected to increase over the next decade, competition for these jobs also is increasing. Particularly keen competition is anticipated for jobs in labor relations. A small field, labor relations traditionally has been difficult to break into, and opportunities are best for applicants with a master's degree or a strong undergraduate major in industrial relations, economics, or business. A law degree is an asset.

Earnings and Working Conditions

Beginning job analysts in private industry started at $11,200 a year in 1976, according to a Bureau of Labor Statistics survey. Experienced job analysts earned $19,200 a year, about twice the average for all nonsupervisory workers in private industry, except farming. Wage and salary administrators earned about $19,800 and personnel managers averaged $21,100, according to a survey conducted by the Administrative Management Society. Top personnel and labor relations executives in large corporations earned considerably more.

Average salaries for personnel specialists employed by State governments ranged from $9,900 to $13,000 a year in 1976, according to a survey conducted by the U.S. Civil Service Commission. Personnel specialists who had supervisory responsibilities averaged from $14,800 to $19,500 and State directors of personnel earned average salaries ranging from $27,400 to $31,900 a year.

In the Federal Government, new graduates with a bachelor's degree generally started at $9,300 a year in 1977. Those with a master's degree started at about $14,100 a year. Average salaries of Federal employees in several different areas of personnel work ranged from about $19,300 to $24,500 in 1977, as follows:

Staffing specialists	$19,300
Position classifiers	21,300
Personnel management specialists	21,800
Employee development specialists	21,800
Salary and wage administrators	21,800
Occupational analysts	24,500
Mediators	30,800

Federal employees in the field of labor relations had generally comparable salaries. Labor-management and employee relations specialists and labor-management relations officers averaged $21,800 a year in 1977. Federal mediators' salaries were higher, about $30,800 a year, on the average.

Employees in personnel offices generally work 35 to 40 hours a week. As a rule, they are paid for holidays and vacations, and share in retirement plans, life and health insurance plans, and other benefits available to all professional workers in their organizations.

Sources of Additional Information

For general information on careers in personnel and labor relations work, write to:

American Society for Personnel Administration, 19 Church St., Berea, Ohio 44017.

For information concerning a career in employee training and development, contact:

American Society for Training and Development, P.O. Box 5307, Madison, Wis. 53705.

Information about careers in public personnel administration is available from:

International Personnel Management Association, 1313 E. 60th St., Chicago, Ill. 60637.

A brochure describing a career in labor-management relations as a field examiner is available from:

Director of Personnel, National Labor Relations Board, 1717 Pennsylvania Ave. NW., Washington, D.C., 20570.

PUBLIC RELATIONS WORKERS

(D.O.T 165.068)

Nature of the Work

Public relations workers apply their talent for communication in many different areas. They may handle press, community, or consumer relations, sales promotion, political campaigning, interest-group representation, fund raising, or employee recruitment. The role they play is crucial to improved understanding and cooperation among the diverse individuals, groups, organizations, and institutions that make up our society.

How successfully an organization presents goals and policies may affect its public acceptance, prosperity, and even its continued existence. Public relations workers help organizations build and maintain positive public reputations. Public relations is more than telling the employer's "story," however. Understanding the attitudes and concerns of customers, employees, and various other "publics"—and communicating this information to management—is an important part of the job.

Public relations departments are found in organizations of all kinds, and workers must tailor their programs to an employer's particular needs. A public relations director for a college or university, for example, may devote most of his or her energies to attracting additional students, while one in a large corporation may handle the employer's relations with stockholders, government agencies, and community groups.

Public relations workers put together information that keeps the public aware of their employer's activities and accomplishments and keeps management aware of public attitudes. After preparing the information, they may contact people in the media who might be interested in publicizing their material. Many radio or television public service announcements or special reports, newspaper items, and magazine articles start at public relations workers' desks. Sometimes the subject is a company and its policies towards its employees or its role in the community. Often the subject is a public issue, such as health, nutrition, energy, or the environment.

Public relations workers help organizations build and maintain a positive public image.

Public relations workers also arrange and conduct programs in which company representatives will have direct contact with the public. Such work includes setting up speaking engagements for company officials and writing speeches for them. These workers often serve as an employer's representative during community projects or occasionally may show films at school assemblies, plan conventions, or manage fund-raising campaigns.

Public relations staffs in very large firms may number 200 or more, but in most firms the staff is much smaller. The director of public relations, who is often a vice president, may develop overall plans and policies with a top management executive. In addition, large public relations departments employ writers, research workers, and other specialists who prepare material for the different media, stockholders, and other publics.

Workers who handle publicity for an individual or direct public relations for a university or small business may handle all aspects of the job. They make contacts with people outside the organization, do the necessary planning and research, and prepare material for publication. These workers may combine public relations duties with advertising or sales promotion work; some are top-level officials and others have lower level positions. The most skilled public relations work of making overall plans and maintaining contacts usually is done by the department director and highly experienced staff members.

Places of Employment

About 115,000 persons were public relations workers in 1976. Manu-

facturing firms, public utilities and transportation companies, insurance companies, and trade and professional associations employ many public relations workers. A sizable number work for government agencies (the Federal Government alone employs several thousand public information specialists), or for schools, colleges, museums, and other educational, religious, and human service organizations. The rapidly expanding health field also offers opportunities for public relations work, in hospitals, pharmaceutical companies, and medical associations, for example. A number of public relations workers are employed by public relations consulting firms which furnish public relations services to clients for a fee. Some work for advertising agencies.

Public relations workers are concentrated in large cities where press services and other communications facilities are readily available, and where many businesses and trade associations have their headquarters. More than half of the estimated 2,000 public relations consulting firms in the United States are in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, and Washington, D.C. A major trend, however, is the dispersal of public relations jobs throughout the Nation, including smaller towns.

Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement

A college education combined with public relations experience is an excellent preparation for public relations work. Although most beginners have a college degree in journalism, communications, or public relations, some employers prefer a background in a field related to the firm's business—science, finance, or engineering, for example. Some firms want college graduates with experience working for the news media. In fact, many editors, reporters, and workers in closely related fields enter public relations work.

In 1976, about 90 colleges and more than 30 graduate schools offered degree programs or special curriculums in public relations, usually administered by the journalism or communications department. In addition, about 200 colleges offered at least one course in this field. Courses include public relations theory and techniques, organizational communication, public relations management and administration, practical courses in public relations, and others. Specialties are offered in public relations in business, government, and nonprofit organizations. Persons with a bachelor's degree in public relations or a related field generally enter staff positions whereas those with a graduate degree are more qualified for administrative and managerial jobs.

Public relations workers must have considerable ability to gather information, write, speak, and deal effectively with people. Courses in journalism, business administration, psychology, sociology, political science, advertising, English, and public speaking help in preparing for a public relations career. Extracurricular activities such as writing for a school publication or television or radio station provide valuable experience. Many schools help students gain part-time or summer internships in public relations which provide training that can help in competing for entry positions. Membership in the Public Relations Student Society of America provides an opportunity for students to exchange views with public relations practitioners and to make professional contacts that may be helpful in later securing a job in the field. A portfolio of published articles, television or radio programs, slide presentations, and other work samples usually is an asset in finding a job.

Creativity, initiative, and the ability to express thoughts clearly and simply are important to the public relations worker. Fresh ideas are so vital in public relations that some experts spend all their time developing new ideas, leaving the job of carrying out programs to others.

People who choose public relations as a career need an outgoing personality, self-confidence, and an understanding of human psychology. They should have the enthusiasm necessary to motivate people. Public relations workers need a highly developed sense of competitiveness and the ability to function as part of a team.

Public information specialist positions in the Federal Government generally require a college degree. Media, writing, or editing experience may be quite helpful in gaining such a position. Requirements for similar positions in State and local governments vary.

Some companies—particularly those with large public relations staffs—have formal training programs for new workers. In other firms, new employees learn by working under the guidance of experienced staff members. Beginners often maintain files of material about company activities, scan newspapers and magazines for appropriate articles to clip, and assemble information for speeches and pamphlets. After gaining experience, they work on more difficult assignments, such as writing press releases, speeches, and articles for publication. In some firms, workers get all-round experience whereas in other firms, public relations workers tend to specialize.

Promotion to supervisory jobs may come as workers show they can handle more demanding and creative assignments. Some experienced public relations workers start their own consulting firms.

The Public Relations Society of America accredits public relations workers who have at least 5 years' experience in the field and have passed a comprehensive 6-hour examination (4 hours written, 2 hours oral). However, because of disagreements over the appropriateness of formal licensing requirements in this field, such requirements are not expected in the immediate future.

Employment Outlook

Employment of public relations workers is expected to increase faster than the average for all occupations through the mid-1980's. In addition to new jobs created by this growth, openings will occur every year because of the need to replace workers who die, retire, or leave the field for other reasons.

Demand for public relations workers may be affected by economic

conditions, slackening as employers delay expansion or impose staff cuts during business slowdowns. Over the long run, however, expenditures on public relations are expected to increase substantially. Corporations, associations, and other large organizations are likely to expand their public relations efforts to gain public support and approval.

Competition for beginning jobs is keen, for public relations work has an aura of glamour and excitement that attracts large numbers of jobseekers. Furthermore, the number of people who transfer into public relations from newspaper, advertising, or other closely related jobs is expected to exceed the number transferring out. This factor should serve to stiffen competition.

Prospects for a career in public relations are best for highly qualified applicants—talented people with sound academic preparation and some media experience. Most openings are expected to occur in large organizations—corporations, public relations consulting firms, manufacturing firms, educational institutions, and others.

Earnings and Working Conditions

Starting salaries for college graduates beginning in public relations work generally ranged from $7,500 to $10,000 a year in 1976; persons with a graduate degree generally started at a higher salary.

The salaries of experienced workers generally are highest in large organizations with extensive public relations programs. According to a 1976 survey, median annual salaries of public relations workers were as follows: Presidents of public relations consulting firms, $38,000; public information or relations directors and managers in the Federal Government, $23,500; in State government, $17,000; in local government, $22,000; in educational organizations, $23,500. According to a 1975 survey of a wide range of firms, public relations executives averaged $29,000-49,000 a year, while public relations managers averaged $21,000-31,000 a year, depending on the annual sales volume of the firm. Many firms offered incentive compensation. Based on a 1975 survey of advertising agencies, public relations directors averaged $20,100 a year, while public relations account executives averaged $15,100.

Public relations consulting firms often pay higher salaries than organizations with their own public relations departments. Salaries in manufacturing firms are among the highest while salaries in social welfare agencies, nonprofit organizations, hospitals, and universities are among the lowest.

In the Federal Government, bachelor's degree holders generally started at $9,303 or $11,523 a year in 1977, depending upon the applicant's academic record; master's degree holders generally started at $14,097 a year; additional education or experience could qualify applicants for a higher salary. Public information specialists averaged about $24,300 a year in 1977.

Although the workweek for public relations staffs usually is 35 to 40 hours, overtime often is necessary to prepare or deliver speeches, attend meetings and community activities, or travel out of town. Occasionally, the nature of their regular assignments or special events requires public relations workers to be on call around the clock.

Sources of Additional Information

For career information and a list of schools offering degrees and courses in the field, write to:

Career Information, Public Relations Society of America, Inc., 845 Third Ave., New York, N.Y. 10022.

Current information on the public relations field, salaries, and other items is available from:

PR Reporter, Dudley House, P.O. Box 600, Exeter, N.H. 03833

For additional information on job opportunities and the public relations field in general, write to:

Service Department, *Public Relations News*, 127 East 80th St., New York, N.Y. 10021.

PURCHASING AGENTS

(D.O.T. 162.158)

Nature of the Work

If materials, supplies, or equipment are not on hand when needed, an organization's work may be interrupted or halted. Maintaining an adequate supply of items an organization needs to operate is the purchasing agent's job.

Purchasing agents, also called industrial buyers, obtain goods and services of the required quality at the lowest possible cost, and see that adequate supplies are available. Agents who work for manufacturing firms buy machinery, raw materials, product components, and services; those working for government agencies may purchase office supplies, furniture, and business machines. Information on retail buyers, who purchase merchandise for resale in its original form, is presented in the statement on buyers elsewhere in the *Handbook*.

Purchasing agents buy when stocks on hand reach a predetermined reorder point, or when a department in the organization requisitions items it needs. Because agents often can purchase from many sources, their main job is selecting the seller who offers the best value.

Purchasing agents use a variety of means to select among suppliers. They compare listings in catalogs and trade journals and telephone suppliers to get information. They also meet with salespersons to examine samples, watch demonstrations of equipment, and discuss items to be purchased. Frequently agents invite suppliers to bid on large orders; then they select the lowest bidder among those who meet requirements for quality of goods and delivery date.

In some cases, however, purchasing agents must deal directly with a manufacturer to obtain specially designed items made exclusively for their organization. These agents must have a high degree of technical expertise to insure that all product specifications are met.

It is important that purchasing agents develop good business rela-

Purchasing agents must develop good business relations with their suppliers.

tions with their suppliers. This can result in savings on purchases, favorable terms of payment, and quick delivery on rush orders or materials in short supply. They also work closely with personnel in various departments of their own organization. For example, they may discuss product design with company engineers or shipment problems with workers in the traffic department.

Once an order has been placed with a supplier, the purchasing agent makes periodic checks to insure that it will be delivered on time. This is necessary to prevent work flow interruptions due to lack of materials. After an order has been received and inspected, the purchasing agent authorizes payment to the shipper.

Because of its importance, purchasing usually is designated as a separate responsibility within an organization. In a large firm or government agency, purchasing agents usually specialize in one or more specific items—for example, steel, lumber, cotton, or petroleum products. The agents are divided into sections, headed by assistant purchasing managers, that are responsible for a group of related commodities. In smaller organizations, agents generally are assigned certain categories of goods, such as all raw materials or all office supplies, furniture, and business machines.

Places of Employment

About 190,000 persons worked as purchasing agents in 1976. Over half worked in manufacturing industries. Large numbers also were employed by government agencies, construction companies, hospitals, and schools.

About half of all purchasing agents work in organizations that have fewer than five employees in the purchasing department. Many large business firms and government agencies, however, have much larger purchasing departments; some employ as many as 100 specialized buyers or more.

Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement

Although there are no universal educational requirements for entry level jobs, most large companies now require a college degree, and prefer applicants with a master's degree in business administration. Training requirements vary with the needs of the firm. For example, companies that manufacture complex machinery or chemicals may prefer applicants with a background in engineering or science, while other companies hire business administration or liberal arts majors for trainee jobs. Courses in purchasing, accounting, economics, and statistics are very helpful. Familiarity with the computer and its uses also is desirable.

Small companies generally have less rigid educational requirements because they often purchase less complex goods in much smaller quantities. Some require a bachelor's degree; many others, however, hire graduates of associate degree programs in purchasing for entry level jobs. Promotion of clerical workers or technicians into purchasing jobs is much more common in small firms. Regardless of size of company, a college degree is becoming increasingly important for advancement to management positions.

The purchasing agent must be able to analyze numbers and technical data in order to make buying decisions and take responsibility for spending large amounts of money. The job requires the ability to work independently and a good memory for details. In addition, a purchasing agent must be tactful in dealing with salespersons and able to motivate others.

Regardless of their educational background, beginning purchasing agents initially spend considerable time learning about company operations and purchasing procedures. They may be assigned to the storekeeper's section to learn about the purchasing system, inventory records, and storage facilities. Next they may work with experienced buyers to learn about types of goods purchased, prices, and suppliers.

Following the initial training period, junior purchasing agents are given the responsibility for purchasing standard and catalog items. As they gain experience and develop expertise in their assigned areas, they may be promoted to purchasing agent, then senior purchasing agent. Workers with proven ability can move into a job as assistant purchasing manager in charge of a group of purchasing agents and then advance to manager of the entire purchasing department. Many purchasing managers move into executive positions as director of

purchasing or director of materials management.

Continuing education is essential for purchasing agents who want to advance in their careers. Purchasing agents are encouraged to participate in frequent seminars offered by professional societies and to take courses in purchasing at local colleges and universities. The recognized mark of experience and professional competence in private industry is the designation Certified Purchasing Manager (CPM). This designation is conferred by the National Association of Purchasing Management, Inc., upon candidates who have passed four examinations and who meet educational and experience requirements. In government agencies, the indication of professional competence is the designation Certified Public Purchasing Officer (CPPO), which is conferred by the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing, Inc. The CPPO is earned by passing two examinations and meeting educational and experience requirements.

Employment Outlook

Employment of purchasing agents is expected to increase faster than the average for all occupations through the mid-1980's. Several thousand jobs will be open every year due to growth of the occupation and the need to replace those who die, retire, or transfer to other work.

Opportunities will be excellent for persons with a master's degree in business administration. Persons with a bachelor's degree in engineering, science, or business administration whose college program included one course or more in purchasing also should have bright prospects. Graduates of 2-year programs in purchasing should continue to find ample opportunities, although they will probably be limited to small firms.

Demand for purchasing agents is expected to rise as their importance in reducing costs is increasingly recognized. In large industrial organizations, the purchasing department will be expanded in order to handle the growing complexity of manufacturing processes. In companies that manufacture complex items such as industrial engines and turbines, electronic computer equipment, and communications equipment, there will be a growing need for persons with a technical background to select highly technical goods.

Many opportunities also should occur in firms providing personal, business, and professional services. Strong growth is expected for this sector of the economy, and a growing number of hospitals, school districts, and other relatively small employers are recognizing the importance of professional purchasers in reducing their operating costs.

Earnings and Working Conditions

College graduates hired as junior purchasing agents in large firms earned about $11,700 a year in 1976, according to surveys conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and Purchasing Magazine. Experienced agents purchasing standard items averaged about $14,200 a year; senior purchasing agents specializing in complex or technical goods averaged about $17,000. Assistant purchasing managers received average salaries of about $20,000 a year, while managers of a purchasing department received about $24,700. Many corporate directors of purchasing or materials management earned well over $50,000 a year. Salaries generally are higher in large firms where responsibilities often are greater. In 1976, earnings of purchasing agents were about 1 1/2 times as much as the average for all nonsupervisory workers in private industry, except farming.

In the Federal Government, beginning purchasing agents who had college degrees earned $9,300 or $11,500 in 1977, depending on scholastic achievement and relevant work experience. The average salary for all purchasing agents in the Federal Service was $20,500. Salary levels vary widely among State governments; however, average earnings range from $10,600 to $13,900 for purchasers of standard items, $14,200 to $18,800 for senior buyers purchasing highly complex items, and $21,000 to $26,000 for State purchasing directors.

Sources of Additional Information

Further information about a career in purchasing is available from:

National Association of Purchasing Management, Inc., 11 Park Place, New York, N.Y. 10007.

National Institute of Governmental Purchasing, Inc., 1001 Connecticut Ave. NW., Washington, D.C. 20036.